NUMB. CLXV.

The GUARDIAN.

Decipit Exemplar, vitiis imitabile—— Hor.

Saturday, September 19. 1713.

IT is a melancholy Thing to ſee a Coxcomb at the Head of a Family. He ſcatters Infection through the whole Houſe. His Wife and Children have always their Eyes upon him: If they have more Senſe than himſelf, they are out of Countenance for him; if leſs, they ſubmit their Underſtandings to him, and make daily Improvements in Folly and Impertinence. I have been very often ſecretly concerned, when I have ſeen a Circle of pretty Children cramped in their natural Parts, and pratling even below themſelves, while they are talking after a couple of filly Parents. The Dulneſs of a Father often extinguiſhes a Genius in the Son, or gives ſuch a wrong Caſt to his Mind, as it is hard for him ever to wear off. In ſhort, where the Head of a Family is weak, you hear the Repetitions of his inſipid Pleaſantries, ſhallow Conceits, and topical Points of Mirth, in every Member of it. His Table, his Fire-ſide, his Parties of Diverſion, are all of them ſo many ſtanding Scenes of Folly.

This is one Reaſon why I would the more recommend the Improvements of the Mind to my Female Readers, that a Family may have a double Chance for it, and if it meets with Weakneſs in one of the Heads, may have it made up in the other. It is indeed an unhappy Circumſtance in a Family, where the Wife has more Knowledge than the Husband; but it is better it ſhould be ſo, than that there ſhould be no Knowledge in the whole Houſe. It is highly expedient that at leaſt one of the Perſons, who ſits at the Helm of Affairs, ſhould give an Example of good Senſe to thoſe, who are under them in theſe little Domeſtick Governments.

If Folly is of ill Conſequence in the Head of a Family, Vice is much more ſo, as it is of a more pernicious and of a more contagious Nature. When the Maſter is a Profligate, the Rake runs through the Houſe. You hear the Sons talking looſely and ſwearing after their Father, and ſee the Daughters either familiarized to his Diſcourſe, or every Moment bluſhing for him.

The very Footman will be a fine Gentleman in his Maſter's way. He improves by his Table-talk, and repeats in the Kitchin what he learns in the Parlour. Inveſt him with the ſame Title and Ornaments, and you would ſcarce know him from his Lord. He practiſes the ſame Oaths, the ſame Ribaldry, the ſame way of joking.

It is therefore of very great Concern to a Family, that the Ruler of it ſhould be wiſe and virtuous. The firſt of theſe Qualifications does not indeed lie within his Power; but tho' a Man cannot abſtain from being weak, he may from being vicious.

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(Price Two Pence.)

It is in his Power to give a good Example of Modeſty, of Temperance, of Frugality, of Religion, and of all other Virtues, which tho' the greateſt Ornaments of Human Nature, may be put in Practiſe by Men of the moſt ordinary Capacities.

As Wiſdom and Virtue are the proper Qualifications in the Maſter of a Houſe, if he is not accompliſhed in both of them, it is much better that he ſhould be deficient in the former than in the latter, ſince the Conſequences of Vice are of an infinitely more dangerous Nature than thoſe of Folly.

When I read the Hiſtories that are left us of *Pythagoras*, I cannot but take Notice of the extraordinary Influence which that great Philoſopher, who was an Illuſtrious Pattern of Virtue and Wiſdom, had on his private Family. This excellent Man, after having perfected himſelf in the Learning of his own Country, travelled into all the known parts of the World, on purpoſe to Converſe with the moſt Learned Men of every Place; by which means he gleaned up all the Knowledge of the Age, and is ſtill admired by the greateſt Men of the preſent Times, as a Prodigy of Science. His Wife *Theano* wrote ſeveral Books; and after his Death taught his Philoſophy in his Publick School, which was frequented by numberleſs Diſciples of different Countries. There are ſeveral excellent Sayings recorded of her. I ſhall only mention one, becauſe it does Honour to her Virtue, as well as to her Wiſdom. Being asked by ſome of her Sex, in how long a time a Woman might be allowed to pray to the Gods, after having converſed with a Man? *If it were her Husband*, ſays ſhe, *the next Day; if a Stranger, never.* *Pythagoras* had by this Wife two Sons and three Daughters. His two Sons, *Telauges* and *Muſarchus*, were both eminent Philoſophers, and were joined with their Mother in the Government of the *Pythagorean* School. *Arignote* was one of his Daughters, whoſe Writings were extant, and very much Admired in the Age of *Porphyrius*. *Damo* was another of his Daughters, in whoſe Hands *Pythagoras* left his Works, with a Prohibition to communicate them to Strangers, which ſhe obſerved to the hazard of her Life; and tho' ſhe was offered a great Sum for them, rather choſe to live in Poverty, than not obey the Commands of her beloved Father. *Myia* was the third of the Daughters, whoſe Works and Hiſtory were very famous, even in *Lucian*'s Time. She was ſo ſignally Virtuous, that for her unblemiſhed Behaviour in her Virginity, ſhe was choſen to lead up the Chorus of Maids in a National Solemnity; and for her exemplary Conduct in Marriage, was placed at the Head of all the Matrons, in the like Publick Ceremony. The Memory of this Learned Woman was ſo precious among her Countrymen, that her Houſe was after her Death converted into a Temple, and the Street ſhe lived in called by the Name of the *Muſeum*. Nor muſt I omit, whilſt I am mentioning this great Philoſopher under his Character as the Maſter of a Family, that two of his Servants ſo improved themſelves under him, that they were inſtituted into his Sect, and make an eminent Figure in the Liſt of *Pythagoreans*. The Names of theſe two Servants were *Aſtræus* and *Zamolxes*. This ſingle Example ſufficiently ſhows us both the Influence and the Merit of one, who diſcharges as he ought the Office of a good Maſter of a Family; which, if it were well obſerved in every Houſe, would quickly put an end to that univerſal Depravation of Manners, by which the preſent Age is ſo much diſtinguiſhed, and which it is more eaſie to Lament than to Reform.

This Paper is to be had of Mr. Yemes *under the* Thatch'd-houſe *Tavern in St.* James's-ſtreet; *Mrs.* Bond *at* Charing-croſs; *Mrs.* Bolter *and Mrs.* Dodd *near the* Temple-gate; *and Mr.* Round *in* Exchange-Alley.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A very good Houſe of three or four Rooms of a Floor, at the corner of Bolton-ſtreet near Piccadilly, with a very good Proſpect all over St. James's Park, is to be Let at Michaelmas next. Enquire at Williams's Coffee-houſe near St. James's Palace.

Robert Norris, on Snow-hill, having had many Years Experience and good Succeſs in the Cure of Lunaticks, is removed to the Peſtle and Mortar near the middle of Hatton-Garden, where he hath a very convenient large Houſe and Garden, Airy and fit to receive Perſons of the beſt Rank of either Sex, with ſuitable Attendance. Any Perſon applying themſelves as above, may there be ſatisfied, that the Cure ſhall be induſtriouſly endeavoured (and by God's Bleſſing effected) on reaſonable Terms.

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